The Parental Intelligence Mind Power Handbook

First Edition

*55 Helpful Notes on 'Mind Power' and 'Mind Programming'
(Ideas, Tips, Tools, Techniques and Resources)*

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http://www.parental-intelligence.com

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"Real mind power has nothing to do with so-called 'psychics' or with 'New Age' sentiments. I'm healthily skeptical about both.

Real mind power is non-weird, non-mystical. It is practical and provable. Even so, we should retain a sense of wonder because the human mind can achieve things which may seem magical or to defy belief."

Ian Rowland, The Mind Reader, The Mind Motivator

Welcome

The Parental Intelligence Mind Power Handbook is a collection of 55 'Notes' on various aspects of 'mind power' and 'mind programming' and related topics drawn from my experiences throughout many years of interest in the seemingly ever-expanding exploration of human potential and personal development.

I'm sure you'll find many items of interest in the pages that follow and that at least some of what you read will make a positive difference in your life.

Please be aware that the contents of this e-book are intended for information purposes only and should not be construed as offering advice of any kind. Opinions expressed are my personal opinions and are not intended to represent the opinions or beliefs of any other individual, or of any specific organisation, religion or philosophy. Due diligence is recommended where applicable!

I'm indebted to Ian Rowland - The Mind Reader, The Mind Motivator - for giving me permission to use the quote that opens this e-book. It captures my view of 'mind power' to perfection.

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Accelerated Learning

Accelerated Learning is a term used to describe various techniques developed from neuroscientific research into 'whole brain' learning and learning environments that are used to speed up the learning process.

Many of the accelerated learning techniques were developed and pioneered by Colin Rose, a successful UK businessman who became interested in contemporary education theory and wrote the best-selling book Accelerated Learning. He later founded Accelerated Learning Systems Ltd.

For more information on this subject, you could hardly do better, in my view, than to start at the Accelerated Learning Systems website.

Affirmations

Affirmations are statements you repeat to yourself about things you would like to become and achieve. For example, "I am a very productive person and get things done", "I easily generate creative solutions", and so on.

Many self-improvement books and teachers recommend reciting and repeating daily affirmations, or playing affirmation audiotapes, and using such learning devices as writing down your affirmations on index cards and putting them in places where you can't help but see them - such as your bathroom mirror, refrigerator or the steering wheel of your car - until they sink into your mind and produce the desired behaviour. Hopefully.

Do affirmations work? Yes and no. Or, perhaps more accurately, no and yes.

In his article *The Pitfalls of Positive Thinking - Affirmations Versus Optimism*, hypnotherapist Roger Elliott argues that there are similarities between the use of affirmations and ways of thinking that lead to depression.

Read the article here.

It's certainly true in my experience that there's a way to use affirmations and a way to not use them. Used in the right way, they can be very, very powerful.

My number one recommendation for understanding affirmations - how they work and how they don't, and what you should know about them to make them work for you - is Mike Mograbi's *Program Your Mind for Success in Record Time!*

See also Autosuggestion and Positive Self-Talk.

Autosuggestion

Autosuggestion is a term used - in a similar way to the terms 'affirmation' and 'positive self-talk' - to describe the conscious repetition of a positive phrase to yourself with the intention of influencing your subconscious mind. Initially, the use of autosuggestion was applied to stimulating the healing processes of the body; its application was later expanded into other more general areas.

French psychologist Emile Coué (1857-1926) wrote extensively on the theory and practice of autosuggestion and is responsible for the most famous of all autosuggestions - "Every day in every way, I'm getting better and better".

Or is he?

In 1922, Coué compiled his ideas and findings into a book called *Self Mastery Through Conscious Autosuggestion*. In Chapter 6 of that book, he clearly states his all-purpose autosuggestion as "Every day in every *respect*, I'm getting better and better".

I wonder who changed it to a handy rhyme? Perhaps the same person who invented that other well known self-help saying "Fake it 'til you make it."

The most powerful personal development idea contained in *Self Mastery Through Conscious Autosuggestion* is really to do with what happens when our willpower is in conflict with our imagination - "it is always the imagination which gains the victory over the will without any exception."

As Emile Coué goes on to write, "Thus we who are so proud of our will, who believe that we are free to act as we like, are in reality nothing but wretched puppets of which our imagination holds all the strings. We only cease to be puppets when we have learned to guide our imagination."

Brains

Did you know ...?

You have 15 times as many neurons (brain cells) in your head as there are people on the planet.

You have as many connections in your brain as there have been seconds since the dinosaurs walked the earth.

In the human brain there are 1,000,000,000,000 (a million million) individual neurons or nerve cells and each of those neurons can interact with anywhere between 1 and 100,000 other neurons.

Which, apparently, makes the number of thoughts our brain can think as good as infinite.

For more interesting facts about the human brain, visit [Michael Tipper's "Amazing Brain Facts" at the Project Happy Child website](#).

There's also a useful overview here of ['The Six Brain Functions'](#).

How well does our brain make sense of the world we live in? You might be surprised by how easily it can be tricked!

[Try these optical illusions](#).

Speaking of "brains" in the colloquial sense, here's a little story I picked up recently (originally published in the Korea Herald in November 2005) that tells us something about the human brain's potential:

"*Eight year old child enters university*

Song Yoo-geun, 8, wants to build flying cars, defying Newton's law of gravity, and the physics genius which has made him Korea's youngest university student may very well drive him to that dream.

Amid scholastic achievements that have confounded experts, the public spotlight is squarely on the child prodigy and his parents, both 46 and both former teachers. What has made Yoo-geun - born late November 1997 and actually just shy of 8 years old - so special?

His parents differ from the vast majority of Korean parents who show a passion approaching zeal for their children's education. "No fixed daily routines for our boy," said Yoo-geun's parents. "Yoo-geun has a monthly schedule only. Rather than being confined by a rigid timetable, Yoo-geun has the freedom to explore every field he wants to."

While other children his age are first graders at elementary school, he is a freshman at the Physics Department of Inha University in Incheon, west of Seoul."

Then, of course, there was that Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, etc. ...

Brain Wave States

The brain is an electrochemical organ and the electrical activity of the brain is measured as brain waves.

There are four categories of brain waves, ranging from the most active (or fastest) to the least active (or slowest).

Beta - When the brain is aroused and actively engaged in mental activities. The frequency of beta waves is 15-40 cycles per second (cps). Somebody actively participating in a conversation or debate would be in beta.

Alpha - A state of non-arousal. The frequency of alpha waves is 9-14 cps. Somebody resting after the completion of an active task would be in alpha. Somebody taking time out to reflect on lessons learned would be in alpha. Somebody meditating would be in alpha.

Theta - A daydreaming state. The frequency of theta waves is 5-8 cps. Somebody driving on a highway who discovers that they can't recall the past five miles would be in theta. The theta state is the state where our actions become automatic and we can mentally disengage from them. New ideas often came to us when we're in the theta state, perhaps while we're in the shower or combing our hair. These ideas are usually free flowing and uncensored and can be very useful to us. When we're actively dreaming while asleep, we're in theta.

Delta - Deep, dreamless sleep. The frequency of delta waves is 1.5-4 cps.

Research has shown that, while one of these four brain wave states may be predominant at any given time, depending on the activity level of the individual, the other three states will always be present.

For example, if a person is demonstrating predominantly beta brain waves, there will still be traces of alpha, theta and delta brain waves in the mix somewhere.

Changing Minds

"How we change what others think, believe, feel and do"

Changing Minds is a website that reminds me of that line in the song Viva Las Vegas: "If you see it once, you'll never go home again"! It's a 'can of worms' in the most fascinating sense of the phrase.

Changing Minds - created and maintained by UK business consultant Dave Straker - is a huge source of plain English information on "all aspects of how we change one another's minds". It's already over 2,000 pages - with more to come! Enlightening overviews with plenty of links, too, to wider or deeper places.

The Changing Minds website has five "primary layers":

1. Disciplines - professions in which changing minds is a core discipline: brand management, psychoanalysis, sales, etc.

2. Techniques - practical applied methods such as body language, confidence tricks, propaganda …

3. Principles - specific persuasion principles: appeal, assumption, framing, logic, etc.

4. Explanations - deeper explanations for how persuasion works: academic theories, motivation, processing …

5. Theories - an alphabetical list of 195 theories, including cognitive dissonance, groupthink, self-fulfilling prophecy, etc.

An education in the 'persuasive arts'!

Visit Changing Minds.

Cognitive Dissonance

'Self-improvement' requires change. Although, since change, we're often reminded, is the only constant in life, perhaps it's more a case of self-improvement requiring the creative management of change toward a defined positive outcome. Or something like that.

In any event, 'cognitive dissonance' is a theory first put forward by psychologist Leon Gestinger in 1957 following his investigation into the seemingly irrational behaviour of members of a 'doomsday cult'. Apparently, after a predicted 'day the world will end' came and went - instead of accepting the failure of the prediction and leaving the cult in droves, as might be expected - its members became even more supportive of the cult and its leader. Gestinger's proposal was that the pain of appearing to be dupes was so great in the minds of the cult members that they were driven to reconcile the difference between what they believed should have happened and what actually did happen by changing their *belief* about what should have happened, since this was the easiest and probably only thing they could do to 'make the pain go away'.

"Awareness that two cognitions [beliefs] are dissonant, or that our cognitions and our behaviour are contradictory, is sufficient to motivate us to reduce the discrepancy," writes Spencer Rathaus in his 2004 book *Psychology*.

In the field of personal development, 'cognitive dissonance' often occurs spontaneously following a decision to make some kind of life change that conflicts with an established perception of our ability to actually complete that change, when it's usually colloquialised as 'stepping outside our comfort zone'.

Sometimes this will result in the reconciliation between 'inner reality' and 'outer reality' taking the form of a reversion to the former lifestyle. This is often referred to in the field of personal development as a 'thermostat effect', an allusion to the way a real life thermostat controls temperature by switching off a heating or cooling system when necessary to keep the temperature within a preset narrow range.

The text book example of this is what happens in many cases to ordinary people who become suddenly wealthy through winning a lottery or something similar. The unprecedented amounts of money now in their control are spent lavishly and quickly and the 'lucky' lottery winners soon return to their former and emotionally more comfortable state of relative poverty.

Conditioned Response

Any specific feeling, emotion or behaviour spontaneously generated by a fixed association trained into the brain is called a conditioned response.

Sometimes referred to as a 'Pavlovian response' after Russian scientist Ivan Pavlov.

Pavlov was studying the role of salivation in activating the digestive process in dogs and wanted to discover if external stimuli could affect that process. Every time he fed the dogs participating in his experiment, he rang a metronome. The dogs naturally salivated when they saw and ate the food, but, after a while, the dogs would begin salivating whenever Pavlov sounded the metronome only and no food was presented.

Pavlov published the results of his experiments in 1903, calling this a 'conditioned reflex', thus differentiating it from an 'innate reflex' - such as pulling our hand away from a hot flame - in that it had to be learned.

Our habitual behaviour in many social situations can be explained by the conditioned responses that were trained into us by our culture when we were growing up.

In some forms of psychotherapy and personal development, conditioned responses known as 'anchors' are used to deliberately generate instantaneous changes in mental state, in particular from an unresourceful state to a resourceful state.

Conditioned responses don't have to be a matter of deliberate training, however. They also occur naturally - as evidenced by a whiff of perfume or after shave that always makes us think of a particular person, or a snatch of song that recalls a specific childhood memory.

Creative Visualization

Creative visualization is a term used to describe the purposeful use of our imagination to create what we want in our lives.

There's nothing particularly 'magic' about creative visualization, although it does often seem to have 'magic powers'; it's a natural capacity of the mind.

The fact is, most people most of the time allow their imagination to be filled with whatever ideas happen to be around them at the time - good, bad or neutral – and consequently live their lives by default. Sometimes lucky, sometimes not, mostly unaware of their own part in their experiences.

Creative visualization is the technique or skill by which we take *conscious control* of the natural creative power of our imagination and *determine for ourselves* the kind of life experiences we want (and don't want).

Once we've decided what we want and a deliberately constructed 'visualization' has been established in our neurology, other natural co-creative powers automatically come into play, including the motivation of 'cognitive dissonance' and the 'Law of Effect', a term used to describe how "we get more of what we focus our attention on".

The Law of Effect accounts for the story so often told in self-improvement literature of how, once we've set a particular 'object of desire' as our goal, we start to see it everywhere we go.

The term 'creative visualization' was popularised by personal development author Shakti Gawain, in her best-selling book *Creative Visualization*, first published in 1978.

'Creative visualization' is not simply about 'mental pictures', however - *effective* visualisation requires mental perceptions corresponding to all of our sensory inputs. Though it may sometimes seem that we think in words and pictures, thoughts are actually 'multi-media' experiences and we need to pay attention in our imagination to sound, smell, touch and taste, as well as visual information, in order to generate a necessary sense of reality in the 'as if' physical experiences we create in our mind. (See also Sensualization)

Creative visualization, when effectively used, produces truly phenomenal results. Some aspects of the process are metaphysical (in the sense that they occur outside and beyond our conscious awareness and in ways that can't be measured by 'hard' science).

Even when it's not referred to as 'creative visualization', in one form or another, this is the fundamental primary technique or skill underlying every successful personal development methodology in the self-improvement marketplace.

My number one recommendation for understanding creative visualization - how it works and how it doesn't, and what you should know about it to make it work for you - is Mike Mograbi's *Program Your Mind for Success in Record Time!*

Creativity

The culture I grew up in taught me that 'creativity' was a special quality possessed only by those who were fortunate enough to be 'born creative'.

If you could paint pictures or sculpt sculptures, or write plays or songs or books, and 'stuff like that', you were creative; and if you couldn't, you weren't.

Much later in my life, I discovered that what creativity really means is putting together two or more ideas that you haven't put together before. That's all.

Recently, I read somewhere that we all have about 60,000 thoughts a day (I think that's got to be a rough estimate - I can't imagine how they could actually be counted!) and about 95% of the thoughts most people have during a typical day are thoughts they've had before. Many of them are the same thoughts they've had a million times before.

On the one hand, that's a bit disappointing (especially if they're negative thoughts), given the creative nature of thought, and I wouldn't be at all surprised if it had something to do with most people becoming convinced that they're 'not creative'.

On the other hand, there are still in there somewhere about 3,000 *new* thoughts every day - thoughts people haven't thought before. How creative is that? Three thousand is a big number.

So, the truth is we're all 'creative'. It's simply a matter of degree.

Bus drivers are creative. Nurses are creative. Electricians are creative. Housewives are creative. Painters and sculptors and writers are *more* creative because they've trained themselves, either informally or formally, to increase the number of creative thoughts they have every day - the number of occasions they put together two or more ideas they haven't put together before.

So, if our natural but underdeveloped creativity is a mere candle flame sputtering in the breeze compared to the roaring Olympic torches of the Creativity Masters, what can we do about it?

Here's a very useful 'hub' website to start with.

You'll find links to other places where you can discover more about creativity elsewhere in this book.

Critical Thinking

"Everyone thinks; it is our nature to do so. But much of our thinking, left to itself, is biased, distorted, partial, uninformed or down-right prejudiced. Yet the quality of our life and that of what we produce, make, or build depends precisely on the quality of our thought. Shoddy thinking is costly, both in money and in quality of life. Excellence in thought, however, must be systematically cultivated.

Critical thinking is that mode of thinking - about any subject, content, or problem - in which the thinker improves the quality of his or her thinking by skillfully taking charge of the structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them."

From a statement by Michael Scriven and Richard Paul for the National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking Instruction.

For a very helpful introduction to the world of critical thinking, visit the Critical Thinking Community website.

Digital Natives

Digital Native is a descriptive term popularised, if not actually invented, by Marc Prensky - "internationally acclaimed thought leader, speaker, writer, consultant, and game designer".

Read more about the origin of the term – and its companion term Digital Immigrant - here.

Here's an excerpt from Part 1 of Marc's two-part essay *Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants* that explains the concept of the 'Digital Native':

"Today's students have not just changed incrementally from those of the past, nor simply changed their slang, clothes, body adornments, or styles, as has happened between generations previously.

A really big discontinuity has taken place. One might even call it a "singularity" - an event which changes things so fundamentally that there is absolutely no going back. This so-called "singularity" is the arrival and rapid dissemination of digital technology in the last decades of the 20th century.

Today's students - K through college - represent the first generations to grow up with this new technology. They have spent their entire lives surrounded by and using computers, videogames, digital music players, video cams, cell phones, and all the other toys and tools of the digital age. Today's average college grads have spent less than 5,000 hours of their lives reading, but over 10,000 hours playing video games (not to mention 20,000 hours watching TV). Computer games, email, the Internet, cell phones and instant messaging are integral parts of their lives.

It is now clear that as a result of this ubiquitous environment and the sheer volume of their interaction with it, today's students think and process information fundamentally differently from their predecessors. These differences go far further and deeper than most educators suspect or realize. "Different kinds of experiences lead to different brain structures," says Dr. Bruce D. Berry of Baylor College of Medicine. ... it is very likely that our students' brains have physically changed - and are different from ours - as a result of how they grew up. But whether or not this is literally true, we can say with certainty that their thinking patterns have changed. ...

What should we call these "new" students of today? Some refer to them as the N-[for Net]-gen or D-[for digital]-gen. But the most useful designation I have found for them is Digital Natives. Our students today are all "native speakers" of the digital language of computers, video games and the Internet. So what does that make the rest of us? Those of us who were not born into the digital world but have, at some later point in our lives, become fascinated by and adopted many or most aspects of the new technology are, and always will be compared to them, Digital Immigrants.

The importance of the distinction is this: As Digital Immigrants learn - like all immigrants, some better than others - to adapt to their environment, they always retain, to some degree, their "accent," that is, their foot in the past. The "digital immigrant accent" can be seen in such things as turning to the Internet for information second rather than first, or in reading the manual for a program rather than assuming that the program itself will teach us to use it. Today's older folk were "socialized" differently from their kids, and are now in the process of learning a new language. And a language learned later in life, scientists tell us, goes into a different part of the brain."

Some further excerpts from Part 2 of *Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants*:

"Although the vast majority of today's educators and teachers grew up with the understanding that the human brain doesn't physically change based on stimulation it receives from the outside-especially after the age of 3- it turns out that that view is, in fact, incorrect. Based on the latest research in neurobiology, there is no longer any question that stimulation of various kinds actually changes brain structures and affects the way people think, and that these transformations go on throughout life. The brain is, to an extent not at all understood or believed to be when Baby Boomers were growing up, massively plastic. It can be, and is, constantly reorganized. (Although the popular term rewired is somewhat misleading, the overall idea is right-the brain changes and organizes itself differently based on the inputs it receives.) The old idea that we have a fixed number of brain cells that die off one by one has been replaced by research showing that our supply of brain cells is replenished constantly. The brain constantly reorganizes itself all our child and adult lives, a phenomenon technically known as neuroplasticity."

"However, brains and thinking patterns do not just change overnight. A key finding of brain plasticity research is that brains do not reorganize casually, easily, or arbitrarily. "Brain reorganization takes place only when the animal pays attention to the sensory input and to the task." "It requires very hard work." Biofeedback requires upwards of 50 sessions to produce results. Scientific Learning's Fast ForWard program requires students to spend 100 minutes a

day, 5 days a week, for 5 to 10 weeks to create desired changes, because "it takes sharply focused attention to rewire a brain."

Several hours a day, five days a week, sharply focused attention-does that remind you of anything? Oh, yes-video games! That is exactly what kids have been doing ever since Pong arrived in 1974. They have been adjusting or programming their brains to the speed, interactivity, and other factors in the games, much as boomers' brains were programmed to accommodate television, and literate man's brains were reprogrammed to deal with the invention of written language and reading (where the brain had to be retrained to deal with things in a highly linear way.)"

"Children raised with the computer "think differently from the rest of us. They develop hypertext minds. They leap around. It's as though their cognitive structures were parallel, not sequential." "Linear thought processes that dominate educational systems now can actually retard learning for brains developed through game and Web-surfing processes on the computer." Some have surmised that teenagers use different parts of their brain and think in different ways than adults when at the computer. We now know that it goes even further-their brains are almost certainly physiologically different. But these differences, most observers agree, are less a matter of kind than a difference of degree. For example as a result of repeated experiences, particular brain areas are larger and more highly developed, and others are less so."

To read the complete essay, Parts 1 & 2 of *Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants*, and other writings, please visit Marc Prensky's website.

Here's an informative article about 'neuroplasticity' at the Neuroscience for Kids website.

Dreams

Why do we dream? And what do our dreams mean?

Some answers from Mark Tyrrell of Uncommon Knowledge:

"People have always been fascinated by their 'secret' night-time journeys. Over the years there have been many theories as to why we dream and the function dreams serve.

Countless 'encyclopaedias' of dream symbols and meaning now exist, but these are published on the narrow premise that 'one symbol fits all'. A revolutionary new understanding of dreams shows that this is wrong and that individual minds tailor symbols and dreams to meet individual needs."

Read the complete article here.

Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT)

What is EFT?

This message from EFT founder, Gary Craig:

"EFT is a new discovery that has provided thousands with relief from pain, diseases and emotional issues. Simply stated, it is a unique version of acupuncture except you don't use needles. Instead, you stimulate well established energy meridian points on your body by tapping on them with your fingertips. The process is easy to memorize and is portable so you can do it anywhere. It launches off the EFT Discovery Statement which says...

"The cause of all negative emotions is a disruption in the body's energy system."

And because our physical pains and diseases are so obviously connected with our emotions the following statement has also proven to be true…

"Our unresolved negative emotions are major contributors to most physical pains and diseases."

This common sense approach draws its power from (1) time-honored Eastern discoveries that have been around for over 5,000 years and (2) Albert Einstein, who told us back in the 1920's that everything (including our bodies) is composed of energy. These ideas have been largely ignored by Western Healing Practices and that is why EFT often works where nothing else will. It's not that EFT is so stunning (although it may certainly appear that way to you). Rather, it is because conventional healing methods have simply overlooked the obvious. You will see that clearly as you allow EFT to bring freedom into your life where you thought none was possible."

For more information about EFT, please visit The World Center for EFT.

You can download a free EFT manual from this page.

You may also be interested in Silvia Hartmann's *Easy EFT*, a free weekly online course, or her *EFT Quick Start* e-book, also free. More information about those here.

Also, there's Silvia's own energy therapy - EmoTrance.

These methodologies are sometimes categorised as Energy Psychology.

Emotional Intelligence

According to Wikipedia, "Emotional Intelligence, also called EI and often measured as an Emotional Intelligence Quotient or EQ, describes an ability, capacity, or skill to perceive, assess, and manage the emotions of one's self, of others, and of groups.

"The term 'emotional intelligence' appears to have originated with Wayne Payne of the Union Institute & University in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1985, although the academic paper in which he first used the term was on the subject of 'emotional ignorance', rather than 'intelligence', and the cultural suppression of emotion.

Starting in the late 1980s, research on the concept of 'emotional intelligence' was led by Peter Salovey and John "Jack" Mayer and in 1990 their seminal paper on the subject first defined the concept as an intelligence.

'Emotional intelligence' was popularised by Daniel Goleman in his 1995 best-selling book *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*.

In his book, Goleman adapted the Salovey/Mayer research to suit a general public audience, so that it would be easier to understand, but he was later criticised - including by Salovey and Mayer - for altering the meaning of the term 'emotional intelligence' and adding claims that were not made by the original theory.

It's believed by some critics that Daniel Goleman's original intention was to write a book about emotional literacy (the ability to describe and communicate how we feel), but he retitled his book shortly before publication to capitalise on Salovey and Mayer's research.

Another major criticism is that Goleman's assertion in his book that IQ accounts for "only 20% at best" of the factors that determine our success in life was presented in such a way as to imply that the other 80% was attributable to EQ (our 'emotional intelligence quotient').

Many people have been led from that to make an incorrect assumption, and the mantra "scientific research shows that emotional intelligence accounts for 80% of our success in life" has consequently now taken up residence in personal development folklore.

Apparently, there's no research that shows any such thing.

Daniel Goleman's five "emotional competencies":

Goleman divides emotional intelligence into the following five emotional competencies:

The ability to identify and name one's emotional states and to understand the link between emotions, thought and action.

The capacity to manage one's emotional states - to control emotions or to shift undesirable emotional state to more adequate ones.

The ability to enter into emotional states (at will) associated with a drive to achieve and be successful.

The capacity to read, be sensitive to, and influence other people's emotions.

The ability to enter and sustain satisfactory interpersonal relationships.

Like all attempts to 'explain human beingness', it seems, Emotional Intelligence has both its supporters and its critics - and meanwhile has also given birth to an entire new industry. Here, for example, is a quote from a book called *Emotional Intelligence: Science & Myth* by Gerald Matthews, Moshe Zeidner and Richard Roberts:

"There is a tension between the scientific and commercial enterprises. The burgeoning sector of commercial EI products ranges from serious tests, to on-line institutions, to soft, cuddly toys that purport to increase children's EI. Science, with its focus on the limitations and uncertainties facing EI, tends to provide a sobering message. Of course, such missives may not be welcome to the salesperson trying to sell the public an ever-extending range of commercially available products."

Energy Psychology

Energy Psychology – An Introduction
by Silvia Hartmann, Creator of [Project Sanctuary](#)

"In these first days of the 21st century, there are two divergent cosmologies in the Western world, living uncomfortably side by side.

One cosmology is the science based cosmology of the universe ONLY containing that which can be measured by human beings.

The other cosmology describes a universe which contains MORE than can be measured by human beings.

Psychology comes from the former; energy psychology arises from the latter.

Both energy psychology and psychology are fields designed to understand how the human mind and behaviour works, and to create interventions which can correct malfunctions, and improve performance.

Psychology draws its tools to fulfil these functions from the limited cosmology of Western "measurable reality".

Energy psychology uses all the tools from the scientific measurable reality research, PLUS tools found outside of that, tools that originate from within the greater cosmology which also contains the invisible, and the un-measurable, which is called "energy" as a collective term.

Energy Psychology – Is It Unscientific?

In a nutshell, yes."

[Read the complete article here](#).

GIGO

'GIGO' is a term used in the world of computers that means 'Garbage In, Garbage Out'. If you put garbage into your computer, you get garbage out of it.

It used to be thought that this was also true of the human brain, but it turns out that the human brain is not organised on a simple mathematical principle of 1+1=2. The human brain operates synergistically. In a synergistic system, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

In other words, when we add new data to our brains or generate new thoughts, 1+1=more than 2.

Since the 'law of repetition' says that everything we do, say or think increases the probability that we will do, say, think or feel in the same way again, the 'more than 2' can expand to infinity. Depending on the type of thoughts we think, we can become infinitely positive or infinitely negative.

As far as the human brain is concerned, then - or the human mind if you prefer - GIGO becomes GIGG.

Garbage In, Garbage Grows.

(With thanks to Tony Buzan. See [Mind Maps](#))

Goal Free Living

If my experiences are anything to go by, there's probably more conflicting advice on the subject of 'goals' and 'goal setting' then any other in the entire self-improvement galaxy.

Yes, being clear about exactly what you want is the first step to getting it and defining and establishing 'goals' is an important next step in that process. But, there are also times when it's equally important to *not* set goals. At least, not formalised goals.

Becoming obsessed with 'goals' and goal setting techniques for their own sake (and some self-improvement 'gurus' I know of seem to be hell bent on encouraging us to do just that) can make

you very *unhelpfully 'left-brained'* in your decision making, as I've discovered to my immense cost in times past.

On that particular aspect, it's worth reading this article by Paul Bauer:

The Dangers of Goal Setting.

For good advice on goals and goal setting, I recommend Mike Mograbi's *Program Your Mind for Success in Record Time!*

In the meantime, if the marketing hounds of the self-improvement industry are ever snapping at you with too much advice about 'goals' and 'goal setting' and you can't think straight - head for Stephen Shapiro's website Goal Free Living and get yourself some fresh air:

You can read about how I discovered Stephen Shapiro's work in my article *Goalaholics* at the Parental Intelligence website.

Hypnosis

Read any scary stories about hypnotism lately?

Well, the fact is, hypnotism *can* be scary - not because of what it is and how it works, but because it can be dangerous when it's being practiced by somebody who doesn't really know what they're doing; and there are many such people plying their trade both on the internet and in the bricks and mortar world.

So, a *major* consideration when thinking about hypnosis is to find a hypnotist you trust. Here's a hypnotist I trust who'll tell you a little bit more about hypnosis:

What You Need To Know About Hypnosis And How It Can Help You
by Roger Elliott of Uncommon Knowledge

"Hypnosis has been around for as long as humans have kept records. And of course, long before. Why? Because hypnosis, or trance, is a natural human ability. Without going into hypnosis, people wouldn't be able to learn, to focus attention, undergo religious rites without pain, experience pain-free surgery and much more...

In this article, we intend to show you that hypnosis is much, much more than a controversial stage trick. Hypnosis is your birthright, hypnosis is a natural ability and hypnosis is the most powerful psychological tool available to you as an individual, as a therapist or as a communicator."

Read the complete article here.

Hypnosis Downloads

"HypnosisDownloads.com is part of a professional psychology training organisation based near London, England. The parent company, Uncommon Knowledge, runs professional-level training courses for hypnotherapy practitioners, as well as courses and services for the general public. All of the downloads at HypnosisDownloads.com have been created by Roger Elliott and Mark Tyrrell, the directors of Uncommon Knowledge, with occasional contributions from course trainers."

Hypnosis Downloads are MP3 hypnosis sessions, each around 20 minutes in length, on a number of different self-improvement/personal development topics. At the time of writing, there are about 230 titles available - Overcoming Shyness, Language Learning, Weight Loss Motivation, Exam Nerves, Anger Management, Declutter Your Life, for example, and a whole stack more.

I currently have about a dozen or so titles that I use.

What I really like about Hypnosis Downloads is that the sessions are a lot like having a chat with a friend about what's on your mind. Except the friend does all the talking. There's no music (apart from a short 'signature tune' at the beginning of each session), there are no voice distortions or weird effects that float around inside your head, or binaural beats or anything like that. Plus these are not the kind of hypnosis sessions I feel compelled to listen to every day, only whenever I need to; which suits me perfectly, because I'm never able to guarantee that I can commit to a session every day of any kind of deliberate mind programming outside of waking up in the morning and going to sleep at night.

Despite being a huge fan of the internet, I'm very 'old school' in some things and I like natural mind programming methods. But I still do recommend using technology-based methods as support tools. Just don't become technology-dependent, that's all!

You can, however, give your progress a *genuine boost* by sometimes allowing somebody else to do the driving for you for a while. As long as you trust them behind the wheel of your mind! ☺

Hypnosis Downloads MP3s are my technology-based support tools of choice.

Would you like to watch a short video of Mark Tyrell explaining how hypnosis works? How about watching him cure snake phobia?

Visit this page at the HypnosisDownloads website.

Image Books

An image book is a book in which you paste pictures of items you want to acquire. Sometimes, rather than a book, this idea can take the form of a poster or notice board, when it's often referred to as a 'treasure map' or a 'magic wall'.

I use an electronic version of an image book in the form of a series of PowerPoint files on my computer. I use it to help me practice visualising my goals, particularly in familiarising myself with details I may not otherwise be aware of.

Image books are great to use for material/physical items in particular - for example, cars, homes, new clothes, health and fitness goals, and so on, where what you see is an accurate representation of the thing you want in every way. You can add text descriptions to your pictures, and motivational statements or affirmations, if you want to. I add bits of text here and there when it's necessary to clarify the meaning of a 'goal image', but I don't use text routinely.

You can also use an image book for intangible qualities you want to develop in yourself (or even in other people!). All you need are symbols that represent what you want. I represent love with a heart, happiness with a smiley face - two obvious symbols - success with a chequered flag, creativity with a light-bulb lighting up, that's another fairly obvious one. There are others that are more subtle and a matter of personal interpretation.

Another very useful mind programming support tool.

IQ Tests

An 'intelligence quotient' or IQ is a score derived from a set of standardised tests. Some research has demonstrated links between IQ and health, longevity and functional literacy. However, IQ tests don't measure other meanings of 'intelligence', such as creativity. IQ scores are relative (like placement in a race), not absolute (like the measurement of a ruler).

The first modern intelligence test was created by French psychologist Alfred Binet in 1905. His purpose in creating the test was to identify students who needed special help with the school curriculum.

In his book *The Mismeasure of Man*, Professor Stephen Jay Gould argues that intelligence tests are based on faulty assumptions and have been used as a basis for scientific racism.

There are a number of associations and organisations around the world for people with high IQs, the most well known of which is probably Mensa ('mensa' is the Latin word for mind).

"Mensa was founded in England in 1946 by Roland Berrill, a barrister, and Dr. Lance Ware, a scientist and lawyer. They had the idea of forming a society for bright people, the only qualification for membership of which was a high IQ. The original aims were, as they are today, to create a society that is non-political and free from all racial or religious distinctions. The society welcomes people from every walk of life whose IQ is in the top 2% of the population, with the objective of enjoying each other's company and participating in a wide range of social and cultural activities."

Visit the Mensa International website.

Life Scripts

There's a line of thought in the arena of human psychology that our mind, rather than being the product of attempts to understand who we really are and how the world we live in actually works, is instead a kind of 'creative production' somewhat like a movie plot, in which a mental representation of our 'self' is the central character.

There's no doubt as far as I'm concerned that each individual one of us is the centre of our own universe. That's a biological reality, and it expresses itself psychologically in our sense of knowing - if only deep down below many layers of cultural entrainment - that ultimately 'my life is all about me'.

The fact is, there are very few facts in our lives. We base most of our choices and our decisions on what we believe to be true. Whether it is or it isn't.

And it could be said that the 'facts of life' are less meaningful to us than *the story we tell ourselves* about life as we *perceive* it to be.

That story we tell ourselves is sometimes called a 'life script'.

The drawing board of our life script is our birth into this world, and – just like a new employee in their first day on the job – we need somebody to 'show us the ropes'; to tell us what's what, who's who, where things are and why things happen the way they do.

There will always be many realities we can figure out for ourselves from our direct experience of them, but, nonetheless, in our earliest years we cannot help but allow other people to make a major contribution to the 'basic premises' of *our* life script.

By the time we've developed sufficient language to verbalise and manipulate our own thoughts, our 'perception of reality' will inevitably contain numerous beliefs that seem to us to be 'just the way things are' and we have no recall of why we feel that way.

Programming our minds for 'success' – whatever our individual ideas about success might be – is essentially the practice of rewriting our life scripts, to replace those parts of it that aren't producing the positive experiences we desire with new thoughts, actions and experiences that will get us what we really want.

There are various ways of 'rewriting our life scripts', either by ourselves or supported by the expertise of others. They range from word-based methodologies that deal with how the script actually reads ('red pen') to the newer 'energy therapies' that attempt to deal directly with pre-verbal or non-verbal impressions.

Here are some methods you might like to take a look at that span that entire range:

Program Your Mind for Success in Record Time!

Hypnosis Downloads

Think Right Now!

Sculptor 3

Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT)

EmoTrance

Magical Thinking

"According to anthropologist Dr. Phillips Stevens Jr., magical thinking involves several elements, including a belief in the interconnectedness of all things through forces and powers that transcend both physical and spiritual connections. Magical thinking invests special powers and forces in many things that are seen as symbols. According to Stevens, "the vast majority of the world's peoples ... believe that there are real connections between the symbol and its referent, and that some real and potentially measurable power flows between them." He believes there is a neurobiological basis for this, though the specific content of any symbol is culturally determined."

Read the complete article here.

Neuroscientific studies have shown that the human brain is highly skilled at matching patterns but isn't very good at distinguishing between perceived patterns and actual patterns. As a consequence, people can often see 'relationships' between actions and events that don't actually exist, creating a magical belief.

Research in cognitive science supports this view. For example, people generally tend to seek confirmation of their hypotheses, rather than seeking to refute them as in the scientific method.

Magical thinking is especially common in children, which is consistent with the view that it represents the uncritical recognition of patterns, since critical thinking develops later than the ability to recognise patterns.

[Here's a pretty amazing (and entertaining) rant on magical thinking](#) from William A. Whittle, author of the book *Silent America*.

Memletics

The Memletics Accelerated Learning System is a new approach to accelerated learning developed by Sean and Kris Whiteley's Memletics Project.

Memletics draws together new research as well as what's known about effective learning into an easy-to-apply learning system.

The Memletics system has five parts:

The Memletic State. How to make sure your brain cells, physical systems and mental systems are in the best state for learning.

The Memletic Process. The steps you take to learn the knowledge needed for your goal.

The Memletic Techniques. These techniques improve the speed and quality of your learning.

The Memletic Styles. Use your stronger and secondary learning preferences to improve your overall learning.

The Memletic Approach. Manage the overall learning journey by prior planning and then tracking along the way.

[Visit the Memletics website for more information](#).

Memory

Memory is the ability of an organism to store, retain and subsequently recall information.

In 2002, a study in the UK scanned the brains of ten exceptional memorisers - people who had demonstrated truly impressive feats of memory, in terms of the ability to quickly memorise hundreds of numbers or unrelated items. The ten 'memory champions' were then matched with a control group of ten people who had no out of the ordinary memory capabilities.

The tests revealed that the memory champions scored about the same as the controls on general cognitive ability, but, unsurprisingly, scored higher on working memory and long-term verbal memory. They didn't differ in visual memory.

The researchers concluded that "Superior memory was not driven by exceptional intellectual ability or structural brain differences. Rather we found that superior memorisers used a spatial learning strategy."

"If you use the right technique, with a lot of application and hard work you can improve your memory. It certainly doesn't look like it's a question of neurological machinery."

With thanks to Fiona MacPherson, author of *The Memory Key*. [Here's her website](#).

There are apparently 36 'Grand Masters of Memory' in the world. The most famous would probably be Dominic O'Brien, eight times World Memory Champion. To become a Grand Master, you have to perform three seemingly superhuman feats:

Memorise 1,000 digits in less than an hour;

Memorise the precise order of ten shuffled decks of cards in less than an hour;

Memorise the precise order of one shuffled deck of cards in less than two minutes

All 'memory masters' use mnemonics - systematic memory aids.

Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain (a reference to the Wars of the Roses) is a simple mnemonic familiar to British schoolchildren that's used for memorising the colours of a rainbow. Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, Violet.

Mental Health

The Basic Human Needs for Good Mental Health and Emotional Well-being
by Roger Elliott of Uncommon Knowledge

"If you are suffering from an emotional problem such as depression, anxiety, obsessive behaviour or repetitive addictions, there is only one place you should start when looking for a solution. Your basic human needs.

It seems obvious, but all too often, when it comes to psychology, common sense goes out the window, and the textbooks come off the bookshelf. Why not leave them there for just now, and ask yourself the following questions ...

If you had no petrol in your car, would you be wondering why it won't start?

If your garden hadn't seen rain for six months, would you be racking your brains about why all the plants had died?

Of course not. But ask human beings to apply the same objective observation to their own lives and you are setting a much trickier task."

[Read the complete article at the Uncommon Knowledge website](#).

Metaphor

In their best-selling book published in 1980, *Metaphors We Live By*, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson write, "The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another."

Metaphor is sometimes regarded as a 'poetic device', as it's used extensively in literature to create romantic imagery, yet we also use metaphors, unconsciously and automatically, in everyday life.

A 'conceptual metaphor' is a categorisation of a certain type of metaphor.

Here's an example of an everyday conceptual metaphor: Life is a journey.

We talk about our "career path", "routes" our lives have taken, following in somebody's "footsteps", topics we "steer clear of", events that are "roadblocks" to our progress, the "landmarks" by which we measure that progress. Are you looking for a new "direction" in your life? "Let conscience be your guide."

Metaphors can be found throughout everyday language and we usually use them without thinking and often without realising that we're talking not about the thing itself but about our mental representation of it. Here are some examples:

"Thanks for all your help. You're a rock."

"I'm getting fed up with your half-baked ideas!"

"He's busy sowing seeds of doubt."

"I like her bubbly personality."

"His words were music to my ears."

"It was a whirlwind romance."

"He fell for that one hook, line and sinker."

"He's rolling in money."

'Personification' is a special use of metaphor, when we attribute human qualities to certain entities or experiences.

"The alarm clock woke me up this morning."

"The sun hid behind the clouds."

"I had to battle a cold to get this job done."

"The performance suffered from a lack of rehearsal."

Another special use of metaphor is called 'iconicity'. This is where personification is taken a stage further into elaborations of behaviour.

"The fog wrapped itself around me like a heavy cloak and threatened to choke me."

"The snowdrop buds awoke with joy at the first hesitant touch of early spring sunshine."

Iconicity helps to make abstract or complex and otherwise difficult to explain ideas easier to visualise.

[Here's a short review of *Metaphors We Live By*](#).

Metaphor is used in psychotherapy to create 'healing stories' and in other ways. Here's a great article on that particular aspect of metaphor from 'energy psychologist' Silvia Hartmann:

Metaphor - What's That?

"Would you like to know what metaphors really are, and how to work with metaphors most powerfully, regardless of whether you want to do this for therapy, for art, for creativity or simply because you know there's something incredibly magical about metaphors?"

Read the complete article here.

See also Project Sanctuary.

Mind Maps

"A Mind Map is a powerful graphic technique which provides a universal key to unlock the potential of the brain. Developed by Tony Buzan in the late 1960s it harnesses the full range of cortical skills - word, image, number, logic, rhythm, colour and spatial awareness - in a single, uniquely powerful manner. In so doing, it gives you the freedom to roam the infinite expanses of your brain."

Recently added to my family library - *The Ultimate Book of Mind Maps*.

It's a truly enlightening experience. To find out more about it and about Tony Buzan's work generally, visit the Buzan Centres Worldwide website.

Mind Reading

Have you ever had that spooky sensation that you're reading somebody's mind - or they're reading your mind? Could it really be some kind of extra-sensory perception?

Ask Ian Rowland - The Mind Reader, The Mind Motivator.

Ian Rowland is a specialist in "mind magic and psychic-flavoured illusions."

Based in London, England, he travels all over the world presenting his shows and lectures.

Ian Rowland's *Mind Power: Fact, Fiction & Fakery* lecture is about real mind power applied to personal fulfillment and success and features "unique demonstrations and illusions that will leave you dazed, amazed and delighted at the power of *your* mind."

For details of Ian's recently released 'Mind Power' Lecture Show video, go here.

Ian Rowland is also the author of *The Full Facts Book of Cold Reading*.

"Cold Reading is the most powerful inter-active psychological technique in the world. It is useful in selling, business negotiations, interviews, presentations and even romance! If you want to influence what another person thinks and feels about you, cold reading is the most effective technique in the world.

Cold reading is also often used by people who pretend they give 'psychic' readings, and it enables them to give 'amazingly accurate' readings to complete strangers."

The Full Facts Book of Cold Reading is the definitive book on cold reading. It explains everything there is to know about this limitless technique!

Read the independent reviews here.

[Read the page about Ian's cold reading under test conditions](). Awesome!

[More information about the book]().

[Ian Rowland's '2 minute introduction' page at his website]().

Here's an article featuring Ian Rowland's insights into mind reading that I found at Stephen Shapiro's website (see [Goal Free Living]()):

[The Power of the Mind…To Be Fooled: Learn the secrets of "cold reading", a technique employed by many psychics]()

Mirror Neurons

"A recently discovered system in the brain may help explain why we humans can get so worked up watching others."

If you have the technology, [watch this fascinating 14-minute video on the discovery and significance of mirror neurons]().

For a text version of an interview on the subject with Daniel Glaser, a cognitive neuroscientist at University College London, [go here]().

Multiple Intelligences

The theory of multiple intelligences was developed in 1983 by Dr. Howard Gardner, a professor of education at Harvard University. It suggests that the traditional idea of intelligence, based on IQ testing, is far too limited. Instead, Dr. Gardner proposed eight different intelligences to account for a broader range of human potential in children and adults. These intelligences are:

Linguistic Intelligence ("word smart")

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence ("reasoning/number smart")

Spatial Intelligence ("picture smart")

Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence ("body smart")

Musical Intelligence ("music smart")

Interpersonal Intelligence ("people smart")

Intrapersonal Intelligence ("self smart")

Naturalist Intelligence ("nature smart")

[A very interesting article about multiple intelligences at Dr. Thomas Armstrong's website]().

Neuro-Linguistic Programming

"Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) is a behavioral technology, which simply means that it is a set of guiding principles, attitudes, and techniques about real-life behavior, and not a removed, scientific theorem.

It allows you to change, adopt or eliminate behaviors, as you desire, and gives you the ability to choose your mental, emotional, and physical states of well-being."

Neuro-Linguistic Programming was developed jointly by Richard Bandler and John Grinder under the tutelage of anthropologist, social scientist, linguist and cyberneticist Gregory Bateson, at the University of California, Santa Cruz, during the 1960s and 1970s.

NLP has been applied to a number of fields such as sales, psychotherapy, communication, education, coaching, sport, business management, interpersonal relationships, as well as less mainstream areas such as seduction and spirituality.

I'm told that NLP is best learned from the originator, Richard Bandler, and study resources to that end can be found at the Pure NLP website.

Nominalisations

From the Human Givens Institute website.

Words that paralyse thought

"A technique used by political managers or administrative 'spinners' to give the appearance of action is that, whenever they want to impose another untried recipe for doing something, they dress it up with abstract nouns - words with no substance that make people feel good or certain about what is being said. For example, 'evil', 'truth', 'freedom', 'wealth', 'change', 'choice', 'respect', 'potential', 'innovations', 'modernisation', 'spiritual', 'values', 'principles', 'progress', 'success', 'quality', 'enterprise', 'ethics', 'standards', 'democracy', 'terror', 'aspirations', 'education', 'equality', etc.

These words are called nominalisations by linguists. They actively muddle clear communication because, by pretending to refer to something concrete, the people using them create a feeling in the listener that something meaningful is being said when it isn't."

Agreed. But, there are times, however - not in general, but in the field of personal development - when nominalisations can be put to good use. See Positive Self-Talk.

Non-Verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication (NVC) is a term used to describe the process of sending and receiving wordless messages. Such messages can be communicated through gesture, body language or posture, facial expression and eye gaze; object communication such as clothing, hairstyles, or even architecture; symbols and 'infographics'; features of speech such as intonation and stress, voice quality, emotion and speaking style.

Sign language and writing are generally considered to be forms of verbal communication because they make use of words.

Non-verbal communication can occur through any sensory channel - sight, sound, smell, touch or taste. Non-verbal communication is also distinguished from unconscious communication, which may be verbal or non-verbal.

(With thanks to Wikipedia)

Optimism

According to WordNet, Princeton University's online dictionary, optimism is:

"The feeling that all is going to turn out well; a general disposition to expect the best in all things."

Optimism includes the assumption "I can do something to change this situation for the better". Pessimism includes the assumption "Nothing I do will make any difference".

Optimism and pessimism are, in a way, self-fulfilling prophecies. When you're optimistic, you're more willing to take some kind of action to change things for the better, which increases the probability that things will change for the better. When you're pessimistic, and you've decided there's nothing you can do, you're unlikely to take any kind of action, which will increase the chances of things staying the way they are.

Research by Martin Seligman, author of the book *Learned Optimism*, has shown that the main difference between optimists and pessimists is how they explain setbacks to themselves. It's also been shown that optimism contributes to good health and pessimism contributes to illness.

Pessimistic people, apparently, do have an advantage in one area of life. They see reality more accurately. So, it's a useful attitude to adopt if you're contemplating something risky or dangerous.

Optimism is simply a way of thinking about things. It's a skill anyone can learn.

It's that old story about the glass. Imagine a pint glass containing half a pint of water (or beer or cherry cola, or whatever you prefer). If you believe the glass is half empty, how much liquid does it contain? Half a pint. If you believe the glass is half full, how much liquid does it contain? Half a pint.

The facts are the same. It's your perception that's different.

Here's a review of the book *Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life* by Dr. Martin E. P. Seligman at the eConsultant Book Reviews website.

And one at Leadership Now.

Perceptual Filtering

It's not what happens, it's what we notice about what happens, that determines our response to any given situation.

Whatever might actually be happening 'out there', our nervous system is designed to process all the information that impinges on our senses before we even realise we've experienced it. Before it reaches our conscious awareness, the raw sensory data is unconsciously compared with our

memories, our mood and our immediate needs and only what's considered relevant then becomes of significance to us.

Without that automatic filtering system we would be overwhelmed by information and would become incapable of making any decisions at all; but the consequence is that what we notice in any situation comes from only a tiny fraction of all available data.

Every moment of our lives, then, is not as it really is but as we interpret it to be.

Here it is in a nutshell from Master of Persuasion Kevin Hogan.

"At least a dozen times I've asked hundreds of people in an audience to look around a room identifying everything that is brown and instruct them to remember what they see because this is a very important experiment.

Then I ask everyone to close their eyes.

Everyone knows where everything brown is because each of their brains has been instructed to focus on and find all brown…and they have been told that this is an important task.

"Now, point to something green."

No one can do it.

Those that point somewhere inevitably fail.

…

It's an amazing thing about the human brain. We can retain an unbelievable amount of information.

But in this case, we can't remember where anything green might be…

We weren't told to look for it…"

"*As soon as you have an attitude, opinion or emotional connection to something or someone else, you immediately filter your awareness of that stimulus through those attitudes, opinions and emotions.*

It's how the brain operates. It's how the brain must operate or it would see something new and have to start from scratch analyzing what "is" and what causes what attitudes, emotions and opinions.

That would be incredibly time consuming and cause the destruction of the human race. …

Unfortunately as helpful as this "filtering" is in general, it creates a very interesting life for each of us.

Fact one: We see what we expect to see.

Fact two: We don't see what we don't expect to see.

Fact three: We see what we are told to look for…and not much else."

Check out Kevin Hogan's top selling book *The Psychology of Persuasion*.

Understanding perceptual filtering is crucial to understanding personal development and mind programming techniques, because much of what 'mind programming' does is to change our perceptual filters - so that we notice things we've never noticed before and no longer notice things we used to notice. This automatically changes our responses.

The concept of deliberately changing our perceptual filters in order to make positive changes in our life is sometimes described in the lexicon of self-help platitudes as 'accentuating the positive to eliminate the negative'.

Personality Tests

What could be more helpful in discovering the 'real you' than a personality test, don't you think?

Hmm … Maybe not. Personally, I'm inclined to agree with the "glorified horoscope" view of Annie Murphy Paul, author of *The Cult of Personality: How Personality Tests Are Leading Us to Miseducate Our Children, Mismanage Our Companies, and Misunderstand Ourselves.*

(It was originally published under that title in 2004, but was republished in 2005 as *The Cult of Personality Testing*)

"Millions of Americans take personality tests each year: to get a job, to pursue an education, to settle a legal dispute, to better understand themselves and others. But where did these tests come from, and what are they saying about us? In *The Cult of Personality*, award-winning psychology writer Annie Murphy Paul [a former senior editor at Psychology Today] reveals the surprising and disturbing story behind the tests that claim to capture human nature. Combining cutting-edge research, engaging reporting, and absorbing history, Paul uncovers the way these allegedly neutral instruments are in fact shaped by the agendas of industry and government. She documents the dangers of their intrusive questions, biased assumptions, and limiting labels. And she exposes the flawed theories and faulty methods that render their results unreliable and invalid. Personality tests, she contends, produce descriptions of people that are nothing like human beings as they actually are: complicated, contradictory, changeable across time and place."

Not surprisingly, this book appears to have upset quite a few vested interests and they've been leaping to the defence of their glorified horoscopes ever since.

More details about the book here.

Here's more from elsewhere on the same subject:

"In a classic experiment that has been repeated many times in many different contexts, [psychologist] Bertran Forer gave a personality test to his students, ignored their answers, and gave each student an "evaluation" he had taken from a newsstand astrology column. He asked his students to evaluate the evaluation from 0 to 5, with '5' meaning the recipient felt the evaluation was an "excellent" assessment and '4' meaning the assessment was "good". The class average evaluation was 4.26. That was in 1948. The test has been repeated hundreds of time with psychology students and the average is still around 4.2. We might translate this to mean that it is quite common for people to be given strings of statements that are not based on any knowledge of the person and yet they commonly rate the statements as *something like 80% accurate.* Similar experiments have been done with phony biorhythm charts, graphology readings, astrological charts, and who knows what else."

(With thanks to the Skeptic's Dictionary)

Positive Self-Talk

Positive Self-Talk is a term I first encountered in 1993 in a book called *What to Say When You Talk to Your Self* by Shad Helmstetter.

Positive self-talk, it seems to me, is really just a modern way of saying autosuggestion. It works in exactly the same way.

In effective mind programming, the visualisation comes first and then the affirmation is created as an identifying description of the visualisation. That's why an affirmation is called an affirmation, because it affirms something that's already established (the visualisation).

Positive self-talk, like autosuggestion, is the process reversed. First you create the words and, then, if the imagination is successfully engaged, the visualisation.

Now, I must admit, before I read Shad Helmstetter's book, I described these repeated phrases as 'affirmations' even though, as I've noted, that's not an accurate name for them. When the phrase is created first, it's more properly a suggestion.

In any event, I use positive self-talk every day and consider it a front-line tool.

I don't see this strictly *as* mind-programming, but it certainly does condition the thinking over a period of time. Only, far less efficiently than working from a visualisation, since my brain waves are usually at the beta level when I use these phrases, not at the more receptive alpha or theta level as in visualisation.

I use positive self-talk primarily to direct my thinking in the moment.

Some examples:

"I can accomplish anything I set my mind to."

"I strive for excellence in everything I do."

"I am as tough as I need to be."

"I have the self-discipline to do what I need to do."

The nominalisations used in the phrases allow for any interpretation that's 'close enough' to be practically useful.

However, while my kind of positive self-talk is subjective and generalised, it does also need to be meaningful.

Sometimes, I read of positive self-talk being described in terms of suggestions like "I am one with the infinite creative energy of the universe" or "Every good thing I do goes out into the world and comes back to me multiplied", or "I am moved by universal spirit to an awareness of divine resolution", and so on. The people who use these phrases presumably understand what they mean, but I find such ideas impossible to relate to my world of moment to moment practical reality.

For me, subjective doesn't mean totally abstract. It just means subjective. My positive self-talk does actually need to relate in some way to where I am and what I'm doing.

Also, the ultimate objective of any positive self-talk phrase, for me at least, is not to be repeated over and over again in perpetuity as a kind of positive thinking ritual, but to become part of my verbal 'thought repertoire' or thinking vocabulary. Once my mind has 'got the idea', my mind has got it and I can trust the thought to 'come to me' when I need it.

Some personal development 'gurus' I know of describe positive self-talk phrases (and 'autosuggestions' and 'affirmations') as statements that something is "already so". I disagree with that totally. These are NOT statements that anything is "already so" - except in the most general and subjective way.

In my view, positive self-talk phrases are not intended to be statements of fact, but rather to be acted upon *as if they're true* for the purpose of maintaining a forward movement of energy (motivation). Subjective assessments of our powers and abilities are exactly that - subjective; and I'm sure an objective study of my behaviour (if there was such a thing, and there isn't) would show that, in fact, my self-assessments are sometimes accurate and sometimes not and many times hard to call one way or the other. It doesn't matter, as long as I *believe* these thoughts are accurate when I think them.

It's the motivational effect of 'acting as if it's true' that really does the work.

Positive Thinking

What exactly *is* 'Positive Thinking'?

Maybe it's the ability to perceive opportunity where others don't. Maybe it's still seeing the best in ourselves and others when things go wrong. Maybe it's whatever keeps us motivated and going forward.

'Positive thinking' seems to have become a kind of catch-all phrase that can be used as a convenient descriptor for anything from the positive self-talk I describe above to having a 'positive mental attitude' to creative visualization to optimism to sappy Pollyanna stuff that can't tell the difference between authentic happiness and mere cheerfulness.

Some people believe that 'positive thinking' is all you need to solve any problem. It isn't. Positive thoughts in themselves don't have the power to solve problems, even though they might generate necessary attitudes that initiate problem solving behaviours.

As self-improvement industry legend Zig Ziglar once said, "Positive thinking solves more problems than negative thinking does." That's probably about it, in itself.

In the meantime, if somebody tells you either that "positive thinking works" or "positive thinking doesn't work", it might be a good idea to ask the question, "What exactly do you mean by 'positive thinking'?" before you get involved in an exchange of views. Otherwise you could find yourself going around in circles until hell freezes over. Or until the Chicago Cubs win the World Series.

Power Affirmations

Here's something rather nifty. Repeated affirmations on individual MP3s. No music, binaural beats, etc. Just the phrases repeated five or six times.

You can buy sets of them on half a dozen or so different topics (at a giveaway price!) and pick the ones you want to listen to. The ones you think are your kind of thoughts.

More properly called suggestions rather than affirmations in my opinion, as already discussed, but useful nonetheless.

Check out the Power Affirmations website here.

You can download a free e-book telling you all about Power Affirmations and some free MP3 Power Affirmation samples to try them out.

Program Your Mind for Success in Record Time!

Program Your Mind for Success in Record Time! is not:

- hypnosis or self-hypnosis
- subliminal messages and $29 subliminal tapes
- sound technology
- mind-altering light/sound zap machines
- Transcendental Meditation
- Affirmations that need to be repeated endlessly
- Pure visualization
- Astral projection
- No need for any equipment whatsoever
- No need for any tapes/CDs and players
- No need for any pills
- No breathing techniques to practice endlessly
- No need to listen to Baroque or any (type of) music

Program Your Mind for Success in Record Time! IS the world's simplest, easiest, 100% all natural and most powerful mind-programming method you'll ever learn!

All you need is yourself!

The fundamental 'mind programming techniques' described and explained in *Program Your Mind for Success in Record Time!* are exactly what I use and how I use them. This is my PERSONAL NUMBER ONE RECOMMENDED MIND POWER PROGRAM!

Visit the website.

You'll see my unsolicited testimonial at the bottom of the page.

Project Renaissance

Project Renaissance began in 1970 when an idealistic group of friends and researchers got the idea of establishing a university for the purpose of developing systems of accelerated learning and intelligence enhancement.

A core mission of Project Renaissance is "to enable as many human beings as possible to become more than a match for the situations, opportunities and problems or difficulties that they find around them, and to enjoy a richer quality of life and experience."

Project Renaissance is the internet home of Win Wenger, Ph.D., widely acknowledged as a genius of the modern age.

The Project Renaissance website contains major inventions Win Wenger has released into the public domain, reviews of his books, descriptions of the creative problem-solving techniques he has developed, up-to-date schedules of events and training courses sponsored by Project Renaissance, and a wealth of other material of interest to those concerned with increasing effective IQ, enhancing creativity and problem-solving, and sharing their ideas with like-minded others.

"Win Wenger has been and is a massively influential character in the world of personal and professional development. His work, usually unattributed, has influenced the whole field of personal development."

[Be part of the new Renaissance!](#)

Project Sanctuary

Is thinking about magical ideas the same as magical thinking? Not necessarily.

Silvia Hartmann, 'energy magician' and founder of [The StarFields Network](#), is the only person I've ever 'met' (I use that word in the internet sense) who can take stuff that I would personally regard as 'out there in hippy dippy woo woo land' and incorporate it into her conversations and her work in such a way that it becomes *totally relevant* to how we function - and succeed or fail - in our conventional everyday lives.

Whatever might be said about the myths, magick and folklore of olden times and today's New Age fantasies, there's no denying that a worldwide interest in these things and in 'alternative reality' phenomena such as Harry Potter and Lord of the Rings, RuneScape, Star Wars and Star Trek is *very real in itself*.

Most if not all of us carry around *some* magical ideas in our heads - if only through our dreams - and, rightly or wrongly, they can affect how we perceive ourselves and the world we live in and how we respond to our everyday experiences.

Are these things merely the remnants of childhood fantasies, or are they something more than that? How are we to understand all these 'magical metaphors'? What do they really mean? How might they be most useful to us in our 'ordinary' lives?

Enter, *Project Sanctuary*. "The Greatest Virtual Reality Game in the World".

"*Project Sanctuary* is a unique set of processes using mind, energy and metaphor, developed by Dr. Silvia Hartmann in 1993, that heals the divide between the conscious mind and the energy mind (unconscious mind, dreaming mind, subsconscious mind).

"*Project Sanctuary* - Magic Metaphor to Unlock the Power of Your Mind!

[Find out more about it here](#).

It's not for everyone. Even Silvia Hartmann herself acknowledges that. But I personally think that, as a personal development tool, it's bordering on genius. You can make up your own mind. ☺

Check out the Reviews to help you.

Psycho-Cybernetics

Psycho-Cybernetics: A New Way to Get More Living Out of Life. Written by Maxwell Maltz. Published in 1960. More than 30,000,000 copies sold worldwide.

This is a self-improvement classic - one of the very best - genuinely worth reading for its insights into our natural goal setting and goal achieving abilities and the absolute power of our self-image.

A highly recommended read. You should be able to pick up a copy of the book on eBay or try here at the Alibris website.

Reference Groups

A reference group is a group or type of people we relate to or identify with and from whom we may derive values and objectives.

These groups can be collections of individuals or they can be sub-cultural groups, for example, 'business people', 'homeschoolers', 'video gamers', 'bikies', and so on.

Reference groups are very important – some would say crucial - as influencers of the way we see ourselves and the world we live in.

Changes we make in our selves that lead to changes in our lifestyle can often generate a feeling of extreme discomfort if we remain in a reference group affected by that change. The necessity of sometimes leaving behind old friends who are no longer 'on our wavelength' can create a very real dilemma and sometimes tough decisions are needed to resolve the emotional conflict.

Other times, however, changing reference groups can be very subtle if the change occurs naturally over time in the form of a gradual divergence.

In the field of personal development, there's this well-worn truism: "Hang around with losers and you'll become a loser; hang around with winners and you'll become a winner."

Often, it can be as simple as that.

Self-Esteem

A definition by Mark Tyrrell of Uncommon Knowledge.

"Many religions' scriptures teach that pride and arrogance are terrible sins, the idea being that you can't worship yourself and a god at the same time. Supposedly, if you are 'full of yourself' you have little space for anything or anyone else.

However, real self-esteem is not arrogance or self-love or vanity. Real self-esteem consists of:

An appreciation of what we can do.

An honest respect for our own abilities, potentials and values.

Knowing our strengths and trusting in them.

An appreciation and open acceptance of our limitations.

An acceptance of these limitations whilst understanding that some limitations can be overcome.

A freedom from over-concern with what we imagine others think of us whilst accepting these perceptions do play a part in everyday life but do not determine who we are.

Having a strong sense of who we are."

The term 'self-esteem' was apparently first used by William James in 1890, making it one of the oldest concepts in psychology. 'Self-esteem' was popularised by American psychotherapist Nathaniel Branden in his book *The Six Pillars of Self-Esteem*, published in 1969.

Like all attempts to 'explain human beingness' (have I been here before?), the concept of 'self-esteem' has its supporters and its critics (and has also given birth to an entire new industry).

The main criticism of the concept of 'self-esteem' seems to be that it encourages people to 'feel good' about themselves regardless of whether or not they have anything to feel good about.

I read at Wikipedia that "For the purposes of empirical research, self-esteem is typically assessed by a *self-report questionnaire* yielding a quantitative result." (Italics mine) Why am I not surprised?

Self-Image

When you imagine yourself and the role you play in the world, what do you imagine?

That's your self-image.

You can only do in real life what your self-image can do, so if you want to change what you do in real life, change how you imagine yourself and the role you play in the world.

That's all you need to know about self-image.

Really.

Self-Improvement Myths

The Yale Study of Goals: A Self-Improvement Urban Legend
by Dr. Stephen Kraus, Success Scientist

"It's probably the most famous study in all of psychology. It's been described in more than one best selling book. Tony Robbins talks about it. It's a staple in the repertoire of motivational speakers, sales trainers, and self-help authors. There's just one little problem... it was never actually conducted.

The story has three parts, and goes like this:

The 1953 graduating class at Yale was interviewed

3% had written specific goals for their futures

20 years later, that 3% was worth more financially than the other 97% combined

It would indeed be a dramatic illustration of the power of goal setting, except for that one little problem of being fictional. This "study" is what I call a self-improvement urban legend."

Read the complete article here.

The Eat Popcorn/Drink Coke Study: A[nother] Self-Improvement Urban Legend
by Dr. Stephen Kraus, Success Scientist

"As I travel the country speaking to audiences about separating the science of success from self-help snake oil, people often question my de-bunking of subliminal self-help tapes. After all, they often ask, what about the "Eat Popcorn/Drink Coke study?

Unfortunately, "well-known studies" aren't necessarily real studies, as illustrated by this classic example. Perhaps you've heard the story...

In the late 1950s, the messages "Eat Popcorn" and "Drink Coke" supposedly flashed briefly ("subliminally") on a movie screen in a New Jersey theater. Thousands of moviegoers were supposedly exposed to these messages over the course of six weeks, and the result was reportedly an increase in Coke sales of 18% and in popcorn sales of nearly 58%. (Why these messages would have made people much more hungry, but just a little more thirsty, was never explained). Reports of the study fueled international outrage - several countries outlawed subliminal advertising, and the Federal Communications Commission threatened to strip the broadcast license of anyone using subliminal advertising.

Read the complete article here.

Dr. Stephen Kraus is one of the world's foremost success scientists.

"Author of many books and articles, Steve's insights on motivation and success are regularly quoted in the media, and his research is cited in major psychology textbooks. He's even been called a combination of Tony Robbins and Mr. Spock because of his scientific approach to the psychology of success. Steve has a Ph.D. in social psychology from Harvard University, and twice won Harvard's award for teaching excellence."

Dr. Stephen Kraus is the author of *Psychological Foundations of Success: A Harvard-Trained Scientist Separates the Science of Success from Self -Help Snake Oil.*

More about that here.

Sign up for the free (and highly recommended) REAL Science of Success Email Course *Seven Days to Greater Success, Motivation and Happiness*.

Sensualization

Sensualization is a word created by Bill Marshall, the originator of Power Affirmations, to describe the internal representation of our five senses.

"I'm not aware of any other author who has used/created this word, though some explain the concept. Most self-help writers speak in terms of "creative visualization." While that is powerful, the sense of sight is only one of our five senses.

I believe that it is even more powerful to engage all five senses in imagining the completion of your goal. What do you see? What do you hear? What to you feel? What do you smell? What do you taste? Using your imagination to experience these sensations before the completion of your goal is what I mean by positive or creative sensualization."

Get over 200 Power Affirmations on MP3s at www.poweraffirmations.com/mp3files/. Sample MP3s are available for immediate download.

Stumbling Over Happiness

Daniel Gilbert is the Harvard College Professor of Psychology at Harvard University. His research with Tim Wilson on "affective forecasting" investigates how and how well people can make predictions about the emotional impact of future events.

"Most of us spend our lives steering ourselves toward the best of all possible futures, only to find that tomorrow rarely turns out as we had presumed. Why? As Harvard psychologist Daniel Gilbert explains, when people try to imagine what the future will hold, they make some basic and consistent mistakes. Just as memory plays tricks on us when we try to look backward in time, so does imagination play tricks when we try to look forward."

"Distorted views of reality are made possible by the fact that experiences are ambiguous - that is, they can be credibly viewed in many ways, some of which are more positive than others. To ensure that our views are credible, our brain accepts what our eye sees. To ensure that our views are positive, our eye looks for what our brain wants. The conspiracy between these two servants allows us to live at the fulcrum of stark reality and comforting illusion. So what does all of this have to do with forecasting our emotional futures? As we are about to see, we may live at the fulcrum of reality and illusion, but most of us don't know our own address."

Read more about Dr. Gilbert's new book *Stumbling Over Happiness*.

There's a study guide with a brief overview of each of the 12 chapters of the book and some excerpts you can read at this page.

Daniel Gilbert's Hedonic Psychology Laboratory website.

Subconscious Mind

In 'mind programming', the 'Subconscious Mind' is what we're attempting to influence; but, what exactly *is* that?

To describe how I personally perceive it, let me start in a different place.

There's a part of our brain called the Reticular Activating Mechanism that, as I understand it, is responsible for generating our consciousness. By 'consciousness', I mean present moment awareness. What we're conscious *of*.

I read somewhere once that our Reticular Activating Mechanism contains about 60,000 brain cells.

As we learned earlier in this book (see [Brains](#)), our brain has about 1,000,000,000,000 (a million million) brains cells all together.

To keep the mathematics simple, let's say that my consciousness is generated by 100,000 brain cells. I haven't been able to verify what I read about the Reticular Activating Mechanism, so I'm talking rough estimates anyway.

So - roughly speaking - for every brain cell whose activity contributes to what I'm aware of in the present moment, there are about 10,000,000 (ten million) brain cells whose activities are totally *outside* my present moment awareness. Either in that specific moment or, in many cases, permanently.

The neural processing of information that constitutes *that* 99.999 etc. per cent of my brain's activities is what I call my *subconscious* mind.

My *unconscious* – which, of course, includes my subconscious mind – is what I think of as *everything* outside my present moment awareness up to the extremes of my biological entityness (which I think is a word that may not be in your dictionary yet, but you probably know what I mean!). *The* unconscious, I guess, would be the remainder of the universe.

The Mechanism of Mind

The Mechanism of Mind is the best book I've ever read on how, generally speaking, the human mind might actually work and - joy of joys - it's written in plain English so that even I can understand it. This is probably one of the most influential books in my personal library.

The Mechanism of Mind by Edward de Bono (1968)

"The human mind can be regarded as an insoluble mystery ... or as a fairly simple and fallible system which depends on the behaviour of its mechanical units. Patterns made by drops of water on different surfaces or by electric bulbs in advertising displays help Dr de Bono, in this fascinating and provocative book, to build up a picture of a 'special memory-surface', which might resemble the brain in its selection, processing and rejecting of information. With simple analogies he illustrates the mind's tendency to create and consolidate rigid patterns, to build myths, to polarize and divide, and then relates these mechanisms to the various modes of thinking - natural, logical, mathematical, and lateral."

The last time I checked, *The Mechanism of Mind* was out of print – but get hold of a copy of it if you can. The section on 'D-Lines' in particular is *essential* reading.

"Edward de Bono is regarded by many to be the leading authority in the world in the field of creative thinking and the direct teaching of thinking as a skill. He has written 62 books with translations into 37 languages and has been invited to lecture in 54 countries. He is the originator of lateral thinking which treats creativity as the behaviour of information in a self-organising information system - such as the neural networks in the brain.

From such a consideration arise the deliberate and formal tools of lateral thinking, parallel thinking etc."

Lateral thinking is a term invented by Edward de Bono. He defines it as "a technique of problem solving by approaching problems indirectly at diverse angles instead of concentrating on one approach at length."

Learn from the Master. [Visit Edward de Bono's website](#).

The School of Thinking

Related to the above and equally highly recommended.

"In 1979, the School of Thinking was founded to teach thinking as a skill by Michael Hewitt-Gleeson and Edward de Bono.

SOT is a virtual school whose mission is to enrich the lives of people by helping them to become smarter and more effective thinkers.

This is a fairly recent addition to my personal development 'armoury'.

[Sign up for the free SOT training, an email program of online lessons in thinking skills](#).

The Secret

'The Secret' neatly summarises what I've learned over the past 27 years about myself and the world I live in and best of all it's free and it's available to everyone.

It's only really a 'secret', however, if you don't know it (and I didn't for almost the first 30 years of my life). Calling it a 'secret' is simply more emotive than calling it 'something you may not know', so you'll more probably *take action* to find out more about it.

It's not something mysterious or esoteric. Just not common knowledge.

[Learn the secret. For free](#).

Program Your Mind for Success in Record Time!

Amazing Formula For Mind-Programming!

Program your mind for success in record time. Be what you want and get what you want. Using a 6,000-year-old, amazingly simple, 100% natural, equipment-free, and do-it-yourself system.

Did you know? You go through 120 minutes of natural mind-programming every single day of your life, whether you like it or not?

You'd better make sure you're programming yourself positively not negatively during this time! Mike Mograbi shows you how to program your mind for success by utilising natural mind-programming and much more.

Program Your Mind for Success in Record Time! is going to teach you a mind-programming method that is truly embarrassingly/amazingly simple.

In short, Program Your Mind for Success in Record Time! is not:

X hypnosis or self-hypnosis
X subliminal messages and $29 subliminal tapes
X sound technology
X mind-altering light/sound zap machines
X Transcendental Meditation
X Affirmations that need to be repeated endlessly
X Pure visualization
X Astral projection
X No need for any equipment whatsoever
X No need for any tapes/CDs and players
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Read my unsolicited testimonial at Mike Mograbi's *Program Your Mind For Success* website

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